

Message Text

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21

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 OMB-01

COME-00 EB-07 LAB-04 SIL-01 OC-05 CCO-00 /087 W

----- 066792

P R 050805Z MAY 76

FM AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9939

USIA WASHDC PRIORITY

INFO AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

AMCONSUL HAMBURG

AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

UNCLAS HELSINKI 0904

VIENNA FOR REX

FRANKFURT FOR FRDCO

EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, ETRA, ATRN, FI

SUBJECT: DOCKERS' STRIKE ENDS

REF: HELSINKI 884

1. FINNISH TRANSPORT WORKERS UNION (AKT) EXECUTIVE BOARD
ON MAY 2 SIGNED COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT FOR ITS
LONGSHOREMAN MEMBERS, THEREBY ENDING THE MONTH-LONG DOCKERS'
STRIKE. LONGSHOREMEN WERE ORDERED BACK TO WORK NO LATER
THAN MORNING OF MAY 5. SINCE EIGHTY PERCENT OF THE LONG-
SHOREMEN HAD REJECTED PROPOSED SETTLEMENT (SEE REFTL),
THERE WAS DOUBT ABOUT THEIR ADHERING TO AKT DECISION.

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ON MONDAY, MAY 3, HOWEVER, ABOUT EIGHTY PERCENT OF

THE DOCKERS DID RETURN TO WORK. IN THE PORTS OF KOTKA AND HAMINA THE STALINIST-COMMUNIST CONTROLLED LONGSHOREMEN DECIDED TO WAIT UNTIL MAY 4, AND ALSO DEMANDED A SPECIAL AKT CONGRESS "TO DISMISS THE MAJORITY OF THE AKT EXECUTIVE BOARD."

2. THE AKT EXECUTIVE BOARD WAS UNDER GREAT PRESSURE IN MAKING ITS DECISION. ON THE ONE HAND THE SOCIAL DEMOCRAT-CONTROLLED AKT COULD BE ACCUSED OF NEGLECTING THE INTERESTS OF A FACTION OF ITS MEMBERS IF IT DEFIED THE DECISION REACHED BY AN OVERWHELMING MAJORITY OF THAT FACTION. ON THE OTHER HAND IT WAS UNDER HEAVY PRESSURE FROM BOTH THE COMBINED SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC-COMMUNIST LEADERSHIP OF THE FINNISH TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION (SAK) AND PRIME MINISTER MIETTUNEN. MANY ISSUES WERE INVOLVED, AMONG THEM WHETHER INDIVIDUAL UNIONS OR FEDERATIONS WERE BOUND BY THE NATIONAL CENTRALIZED INCOMES POLICY AGREEMENT, OR WHETHER A SMALL MINORITY SUCH AS THE STALINIST FACTION OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY COULD GO ITS OWN WAY CREATING CHAOS AND ECONOMIC HARDSHIP FOR OTHER WORKERS -- ANOTHER 15,000 WERE EXPECTED TO BE LAID OFF IF THE STRIKE CONTINUED, AS WELL AS SEVERE LOSSES TO THE NATIONAL ECONOMY (2/3 OF FINNISH EXPORTS GO THROUGH THE PORTS). PRIME MINISTER MIETTUNEN IS GIVEN MUCH OF THE CREDIT FOR THE AKT DECISION, BUT IT WAS THE BOARD ITSELF THAT SHOWED REAL COURAGE IN TAKING IT.

3. IT IS EXPECTED THAT LOADING AND UNLOADING OF SHIPS WILL NOT BE BACK TO FULLY NORMAL FOR ANOTHER WEEK. ON MAY 3, ONLY 16 OF THE 36 SHIPS IN HELSINKI HARBORS WERE BEING WORKED ON. UNLOADING IS PROCEEDING BY ORDER OF ARRIVAL OF SHIPS, EXCEPT FOR THOSE CARRYING CARGO THAT WOULD BE SPOILED IF NOT UNLOADED IMMEDIATELY. HOUSTON

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